



Twelve city workmen were busy today mowing grass and doing other maintenance work in a section of Eastlawn Cemetery that was the subject of a complaint taken to the City Council Thursday night. Pearl Martin Jr. told the council black residents object to the fact that there has been segregation in the assignment of burial plots

in the cemetery, and that the area where many blacks are buried, has not been properly maintained. City officials denied that segregation was practiced but admitted a portion of the cemetery had been neglected. (Daily News Photo)

Children Asked To Stay Out of City Cemeteries

Cooperation of parents in an attempt to keep children out of city cemeteries was asked today by Oliver W. Coppernoll,

The plea followed a wave of vandalism noted there. Coppernoll said youngsters were taking veteran's staffs off graves, scattering them around the grounds and even breaking them.

He noted children should be reminded that cemeteries are not playgrounds. 3-22-66

11-8-66 Reward Posted For Arrest of Statue Vandals

Vandals who recently caused unestimated damage to the Civil War veterans monument at Oakwood Cemetery have aroused the ire of the Beloit City Council. President William Bolgrien said Monday night.

The council has offered a \$100 reward for arrest and conviction of vandals who toppled a hand-carved, granite statue from its place on the monument, smashing the statue.

"No words can express the contempt and disgust" of city officials for the vandalism, Bolgrien said. He has asked for a report on cost of constructing a fence around the cemetery.

Fence Installed At City Cemetery

Oakwood Cemetery now is fenced.

The fencing, installation of which was completed late last week, is designed to prevent vandalism such as caused extensive damage to a statue last fall.

The statue has been repaired. It forms part of the monument to dead of the Civil War.

City Council members ordered erection of the fence to discourage trespassers, especially those driving automobiles, after night-fall. 11/16/67

repairs by Jackson Monument Co. Inc. 11-1-66 to 11-31-66 completed + restored to its place



What price hand-carved granite statuary? Oliver E. Coppernoll, Beloit cemeteries superintendent, wonders what it will cost to repair vandalism done over the weekend to the monument to Civil War veterans at Oakwood Cemetery. The life-size statue of a sailor was thrown down and broken. Citizens erected the monument just after the return of the century.

(Daily News photo by Ray C. Wentworth)

11-31-66 Vandals Damage Cemetery Statue; \$5,000 Estimate

Vandals caused heavy damage during the weekend at Oakwood Cemetery, police said today.

Statuary, handcarved from granite, was toppled from a large monument commemorating war veterans. The statue was of a sailor.

City Cemetery Superintendent Oliver E. Coppernoll said cost to replace the statue would be about \$5,000.

Cemetery Vandals:

11/11/66

It Was More Than a Statue

By Daisy W. Chapin

Curator, Bartlett Museum

BELOITERS OF ALL ages and walks of life were shocked by the photograph on Page 3, The Beloit Daily News, Nov. 1. It pointed out the destructive element in our community who not only defaced the 60-year-old Soldiers' Monument in Oakwood Cemetery on Halloween. The perpetrators of this crime had no respect for property, the setting which they chose for their vandalism or appreciation of the significance of this memorial. Along with their lack of good citizenship standards, they used immature judgment.

It is too late to save this venerable monument from their reckless spirit of adventure despite the consequences, but it isn't too late to show them, and their age group, constructive uses of that spirit.

Such examples are to be found in the youth of Beloit, who allied themselves with a worthy cause when they went into training camps and served on battlefields during the Civil War. Their self sacrifice and courage is commemorated by this impressive statue.

IN THE BOOKLET "Beloit Dedicates Her Soldiers' Monument," published by the Beloit Free Press in 1905, the complete history of how Beloit carried on this project is recorded. Edward P. Hansen, secretary-treasurer of the Citizens' Monument Association traced the step by step process in his financial report, given at the dedication exercises in the City Cemetery, May 30, 1905.

Soon after the Civil War Beloit College built and dedicated its Memorial Hall (now known as the Logan Museum) in honor of its alumni who took up arms during the Rebellion. Beloit citizens as well as college personnel made contribution to this memo-

rial. But the two newly formed patriotic organizations, the L.H.D. Crane Post No. 54, G.A.R. and the Women's Relief Corps favored a second memorial here, one that would include all who had served their country from Beloit. Their members never relinquished this objective though it required nearly forty years to achieve it.

THEIR FIRST MAJOR step was a petition granted by the Beloit City Council in 1889, reserving a plot in the cemetery for the burial of veterans. A promise that a monument dedicated to the memory of veterans would be placed on this plot, was attached to the petition.

The Spanish-American War revived the memorial idea, but its

short duration caused a lapse in interest. Finally in 1904, a Citizens' Monument Association, headed by two outstanding divic leaders, Joel B. Dow and Edward P. Hansen, made the community dream a reality.

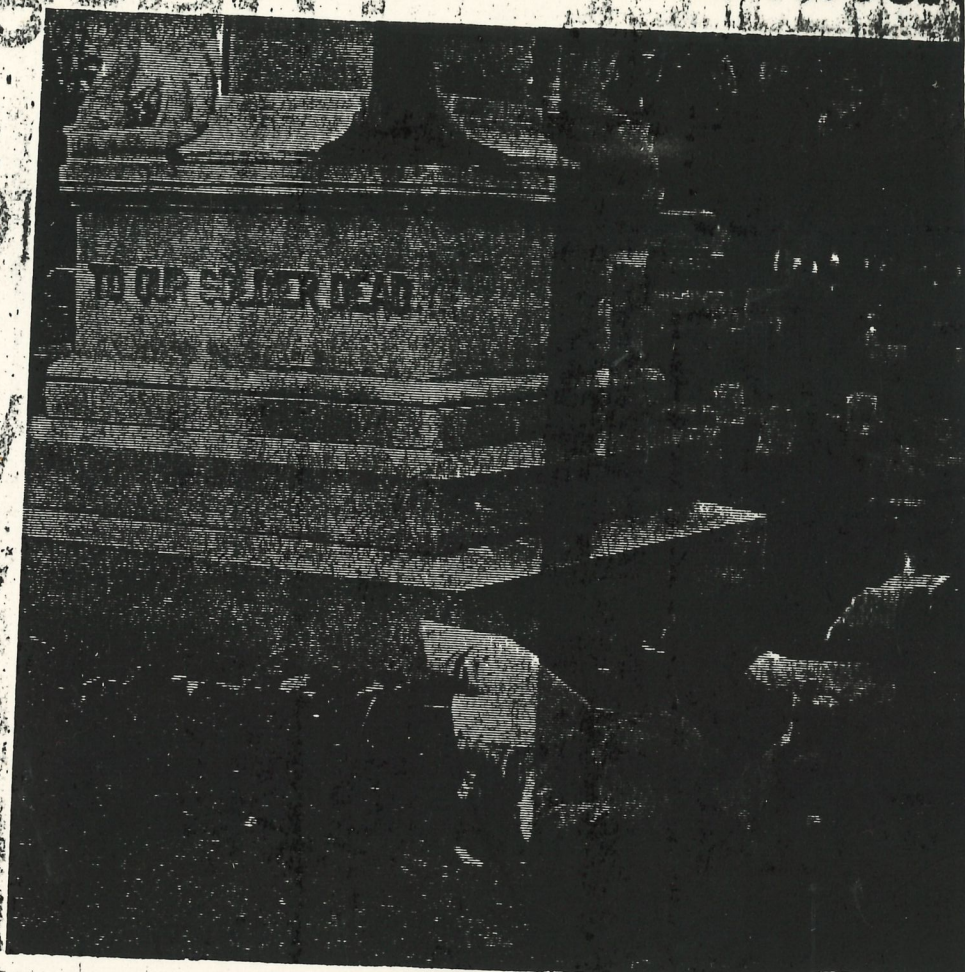
The booklet has the itemized receipts and expenditures of this fine fund-raising campaign. Contributions included \$1,960 subscribed by private citizens; \$700 by the G.A.R.; \$500 by the Women's Relief Corps; \$353 by the Beloit Public Schools; together with various sized sums from 12 other organizations totalled \$4,285. This was \$104 in excess of the cost of the monument. There are still many of those school children and high school youths in Beloit today who have the bronze medal they received for

their contribution to the monument fund.

HIGHLIGHT OF THE dedication ceremonies was Jole B. Dow's eloquent address, which is a part of the booklet. He used as a theme God's command to Moses "put off thy shoes from off they feet, for the place whereon thou standeth is holy ground." Those who stood and listened to Dow's stirring message around the graves of Beloit's war heroes, felt that they, too, stood on hallowed ground.

This is the message of dedication service in the booklet "Beloit Dedicates Her Soldiers' Monument"?

Perhaps it should be required reading for young Beloiters today.



A shattered stone sailor in Oakwood Cemetery.

March 1974



Historic headstones damaged

Vandals have damaged more than 25 old headstones in Oakwood Cemetery. Some date to the 1840s. About half can be reset and the others will have to be laid flat on the ground. Officials could not estimate the amount of the damage because the old stones are not replaceable. (Daily News photo by C. A. McCormick)



Cemetery spruce-up

Plastic flowers and ferns, evergreen boughs, dead leaves and other material that accumulates in Oakwood Cemetery over the winter were cleaned up Tuesday by city worker Ted Manley. Citizens who wished to cover items were advised of the cleanup beforehand. (Daily News photo)

Vandals hit cemeteries

Just beneath the new snow, about 45 gravestones at Oakwood Cemetery lie knocked down — some destroyed — the work of vandals pre-occupied with the present and callous about the past.

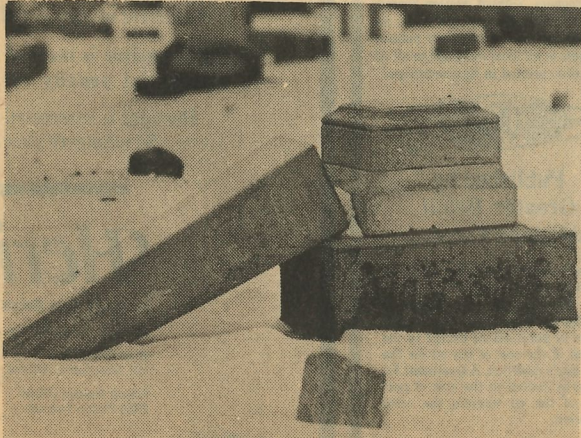
And, according to city officials, because many of the stones are old, nothing can be done to replace them, leaving the graves they name markerless against the advance of time.

Public Works Director Frank Zuicarelli said vandalism at Oakwood and other city cemeteries is a big problem. Last year, he said about 125 stones were knocked over but that officials often don't report it to police in fear published accounts will only lead to more damage.

Zuicarelli said old gravestones made of sandstone, some dating to the Civil War and earlier, make easy targets for vandals. But because of their age, most cannot be repaired and that family and friends who could purchase new ones have long since departed.

If the stones can be repaired, Zuicarelli said workers try to patch them together and stand them up again. If not, he said they are simply laid on the grave.

Time has also erased many of the names, leaving only barren anonymity.



(Daily News photo by Peter J. Schultz)

Toppled gravestones in Oakwood Cemetery.

Vandalism fund established

Reports of cemetery vandalism have prompted City Councilman Thomas Warren to setting up a reward fund for anyone contributing information that leads to the arrest and conviction of those responsible for the vandalism.

Warren said today that last week's Daily News article and editorial on vandalism to headstones at Oakwood Cemetery led him to set up the fund, and contributed \$25 to get it started. The Daily News contributed \$50 and the Near East Side Neighborhood Association has offered \$25.

"So, that's \$100, and I haven't talked to anyone else yet," he said. The fund will be set up at the First National Bank, and anyone who wants to contribute can send donations there.

"Oakwood Cemetery is a true jewel within Beloit," said Warren, "both historically and aesthetically. I want to do everything to keep it that way.

"We shouldn't overlook other kinds of vandalism and this can be taken as a warning that we're not going to tolerate it anymore. We'll work hard to find out who's responsible and stop it," he added.

Warren said he is convinced that the city has to take a stand on vandalism. He said the number of downed headstones in Oakwood is enormous and it is a conscious effort by someone to do this destruction.

"And I think there are people out there who know who did it. We want them to come forth and contact the police department.

Tombstones damaged

About \$1,500 worth of damage was reported Sunday night after vandals knocked over six tombstones at Oakwood Cemetery, 1221 Clary Ave.

The incident was reported about 9 p.m. Sunday. Two youths on bicycles were seen in the cemetery about the time the vandalism occurred, police said. The cemetery has had vandalism problems recently.

Affront to the dead

12-80
Repairs, prosecution should be goals

IT'S NOT OFTEN that people think about cemeteries. Generally, the only time a cemetery becomes important in a person's life is when tragedy strikes, and a loved one is lost. Perhaps a few times each year, family members will visit a grave to place flowers and memorials.

The situation at Beloit's Oakwood Cemetery, however, requires more attention than that. Over the course of several weeks, vandals have tipped over or broken dozens of monuments. The visual effect is, to say the least, depressing.

The action of the vandals is barely worth comment. Such malicious destruction is shameful, immoral and criminal. Authorities should give high priority to apprehending and prosecuting those responsible. Restitution, allowing for repair or replacement of damaged memorials, should be an important part of the penalty.

MORE IMMEDIATELY, something must be done to restore the cemetery's appearance. We believe this responsibility rests primarily with city government.

Oakwood is a city-owned cemetery. Its upkeep is provided for under city authority. Of course, this arrangement doesn't mean the city bears all financial responsibility. Initially, burial costs, headstones and the like are paid for by the family of the deceased.

When vandalism occurs, however, the city should do everything possible to see that the area is restored. Most of the headstones are simply tipped over, and could be righted with relative ease. Others are cracked or chipped, and could also be easily repaired. Few have been damaged to the extent that removal or replacement are the only alternatives.

Why can't city workers make prompt repairs and do cleanup? It's not the sort of job that would require large amounts of time. Two or three



men, spending a few hours, could accomplish repairs on several of the headstones. By assigning crews to the task during slack hours each month, the cemeteries could be kept in good repair.

We don't think the city should be financially responsible for replacement of headstones that are damaged beyond repair. The family of the deceased must bear that responsibility. If the family doesn't wish to replace the stone, or cannot be located (some of the graves are more than 100 years old), the city crews should simply remove broken pieces and see that the area is kept neat.

We're not saying city government doesn't care. Rather, we suspect cemetery projects simply wind up down a ways on the priority list. As was mentioned above, cemeteries generally just aren't on people's minds a lot.

CEMETERIES ARE an important part of a community. Through them, residents memorialize loved ones, and remember those who have been instrumental in making the city what it is. That's reason enough, in our opinion, to stress neatness of appearance and vigorous prosecution policies for suspected vandals.

It's important that a community preserve its link to the past. Proper upkeep of cemeteries is part of that obligation.

Council moves to curb vandals at cemetery

Beloit City Manager Herb Holt was asked Monday to bring a recommendation to the next city council meeting for dealing with the problem of vandalism in Oakwood Cemetery.

"It's so frustrating," said Councilman Tom Warren, who brought up the matter at Monday's council meeting.

On Aug. 4, vandals did thousands of dollars damage to 72 grave markers in the cemetery, which is located at 1221 Clary Ave. The cemetery was vandalized again Sunday night when six gravestones were knocked over, resulting in \$1,500 damage.

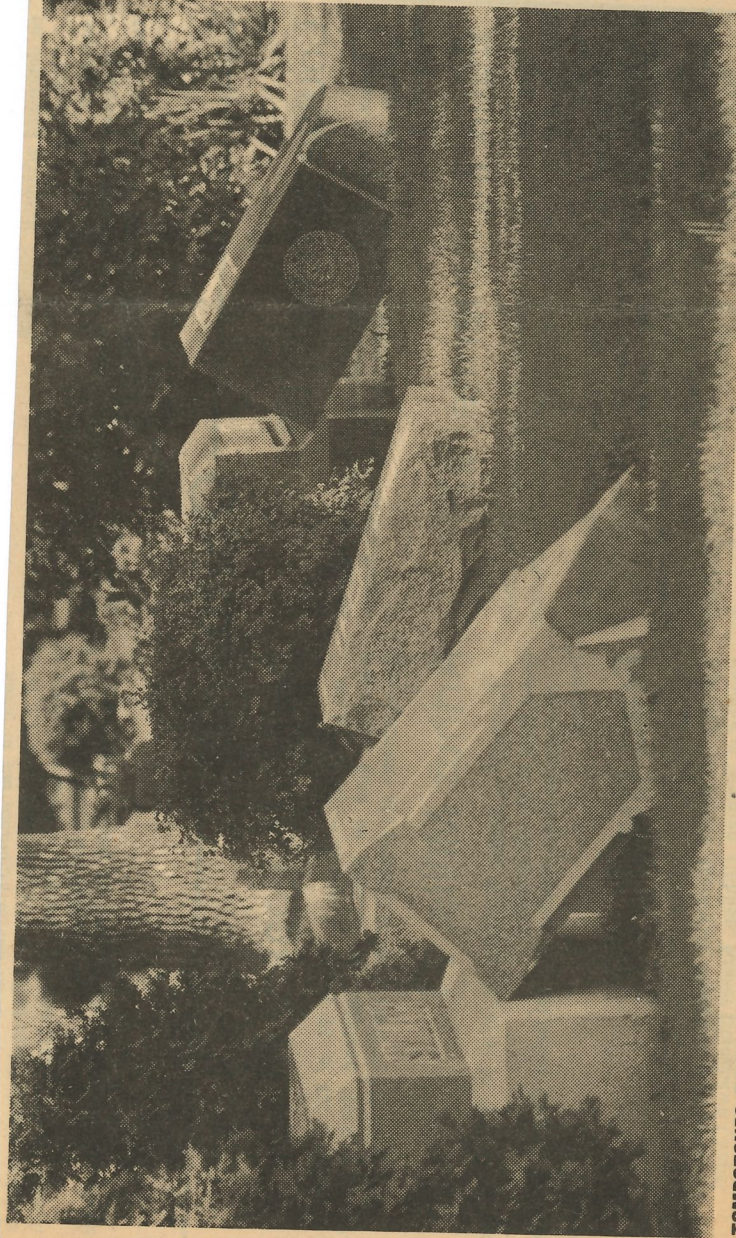
As one way of dealing with the problem, Warren suggested that the matter could be turned over to Crime Stoppers, which offers cash rewards for confidential tips about crimes.

Warren said it appears that the gates of the cemetery are not closed at night, which provides easy access to vandals.

"We get more complaints from locking them than we do from not locking them," Holt replied.

"I think they should be locked after a certain hour at night," said Everett Haskell, council president.

The next council meeting is set for Sept. 7.



TOMBSTONES TOPPLED — Oakwood Cemetery, 1221 Clary Ave., has recently been the site of several acts of vandalism. These three tombstones are just a few of the dozens of gravemarkers that have been toppled. The most recent

report of damage came Sunday night when \$1,500 worth of destruction was discovered. (Daily News photo by Bill Olmsted)

BELOIT DAILY NEWS, Tuesday, August 17, 1982

SATURDAY, AUGUST 1, 1992



Staff photo by J.B. Maloney

Vandals broke into the Oakwood Cemetery in Beloit Thursday night, tipping and smashing more than 160 headstones and monuments.

Several of the historic monuments were destroyed, and police estimate the damage between \$25,000-\$30,000.

Vandals smash, tip 160 headstones at cemetery

By Robert Baxter Jr.

Daily News staff writer

A part of Beloit's history was destroyed by vandals Thursday night when more than 160 grave monuments and headstones were smashed, tipped over and damaged at Oakwood Cemetery.

Some monuments, as high as eight or nine feet tall and weighing more than 1,000 pounds, lay fallen and destroyed when employees arrived to unlock the gates Friday morning.

It looked like "an earthquake had rattled them off their bases," one employee told police.

The cemetery "dates back to the 1800s when people first started to be interned there," said Bob Carlson, Beloit's superintendent of cemeteries. "Many of the monuments from that era were damaged and tipped over. Police estimated the damage be-

tween \$25,000 and \$30,000, however, the historical value can never be replaced.

"They're virtually irreplaceable," Carlson said.

Police were first notified of the vandalism shortly after 10 a.m.

"So far we have nothing," said Sgt. Don Mitchell, of the Beloit Police Department. "It had to be more than one person, probably a group (of possibly large kids).

Police said neighbors who live to the south of the cemetery in the 1200 block of Clary Street, near the most heavily damaged area, didn't see anything.

"We're sending second shift of officers up to continue the investigation and talk to people," said Mitchell.

Sgt. Bob Hurley said he was surprised at the extent of the damage.

"It's disgusting," he said.

"Some of them were ripped from the metal support rods and others were tipped over and smashed."

Carlson, also town chairman of Newark, said unfortunately this was not the first time he had seen this type of damage.

"We had something similar out in Newark (last year)," said Carlson. "It was looked at as a community project (to resolve that situation). It's going to take a little more to resolve this one.

"We're just hoping that if we heighten the profile of this, enough people will become upset," Carlson added.

Police are asking that anyone with information on the incident call the department at 364-6804.

Det. Vic Hanson, Beloit's Police Department Crime Stoppers coordinator, said callers may also call the crime line at 362-7463 or 36-CRIME.

Editorials

Behind bars

Just one penalty fits the crime committed last week at Beloit's Oakwood Cemetery.

WHAT IS IT that makes some people think it's fun to destroy things? What perverse pleasure is derived from tearing down what it took others great effort and expense to erect?

It's seen all too often. In some places, vandals have used spray paint to deface property, sometimes painting on gang symbols or obscene remarks. One cannot visit the riverfront without noticing a picnic table tossed into the water, the handiwork of some mental midget who thought it was fun. News reports often cite instances of cars being scratched with keys, or dented with thrown rocks. Merchants with outdoor displays know the frustration of having hours of work destroyed in a minute's thoughtlessness.

It's shameful.

BUT THAT WORD can't touch what happened last week at Beloit's Oakwood Cemetery, where vandals tipped and smashed 160 headstones.

Fences and walls can be repainted. Items can be retrieved and cleaned from the Rock River. Commercial displays can be replaced. But part of Beloit's history may be gone forever with the mindless destruction at the cemetery.

In fact, the word vandal can't describe those who are responsible for this act. Vandal suggests something almost minor, just up a couple notches from a youthful prank. There's nothing minor about the criminal conduct at Oakwood.

It harmed Beloit. It harmed families. And, yes, it harmed the memories of those interred at Oakwood. Few things are lower than crimes against the dead.

PERSONS WITH ANY knowledge of the crime are urged to call Beloit police. Those who wish to remain anonymous can call Crime Stoppers, at 362-7463.

Someone knows. And that someone can collect a cash reward for telling.

In addition, a fund has been set up to be used as a reward for information that leads to conviction of the guilty ones. It was started by Danny Shear of Beloit Redi-Mix. Those wanting to contribute to the fund can call Gerry White at the First National Bank, 364-4401.

Fines are great. Restitution is too, assuming the defendant has any money, which would be a very large assumption in the case of individuals who would commit this kind of crime. Behind bars. That's where bums like these belong.

Beloit Daily News

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